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PLAYING-CARDS.

FEW who sit down to a pleasant game at whist or piquet have any idea how many centuries these painted bits of card have furnished amusement to the human race. Far away into the times of unwritten history, the Chinese, Hindus, and Arabs were making their different combinations of a warlike game, bearing many relations to its sister, Chess. On thin slips of ivory, mother-of-pearl, or wood, the devices were painted for the hands of oriental despots; no less than eight armies and eight players struggled for the victory, under the command of a king, a vizier, and an elephant. China seems to have been the home of their invention; from thence they passed on to India about 1120, and were soon adopted by the Arabs. Our crusaders in their turn learned the game of their foes; and from the number of decrees forbidding their use issued by the church, we may believe that they were soon spread all over Europe. The first authentic mention that occurs of them is in a Chronicle of Nicolas de Covelluzzo, a native of Viterbo, which says: 'In 1379 the game of cards was introduced at Viterbo, from the land of the Saracens, and which is called by them *naib*.' We hear of them in Burgos in 1387, in Paris in 1392, in Ulm in 1397, keeping the root of their Arab name, as they are still called in Spain *naypes*, *naib* in Arabic meaning captain or lieutenant. Italy soon adopted the title of tarots or tarocchi, owing to the back of the card being taroté, or covered with little points or divisions, invented to prevent knaves from marking the cards, and cheating at the game.

From the fourteenth century, we find them spread all over Europe; they are mentioned in the lists of plate and jewellery belonging to monarchs and nobles; councils and synods condemned and forbade them, as well as royal proclamations; commerce, however, still multiplied them, in perfecting the process of fabrication. In the miniatures of manuscripts, in the early attempts of engraving on wood and copper, we see the game portrayed; poets, romance-writers, and travelling

story-tellers do not forget them in their writings; and fragile as were the cards themselves, there are some painted and engraved which belong to the fifteenth century, still in existence; their names, colours, emblems, and forms, changed according to their country, but they are still playing-cards.

Nor can we suppose, with some learned critics, that cards were but the amusement of children. St Bernard of Siena and St Antony of Florence would scarcely have used such strong language against their use, had it been so. On the 5th of May, 1423, the former, standing on the steps of the church of Saint Petronius, spoke to an immense crowd assembled round him, poured forth his fulminations against games of chance; and exercised so much power over his audience, that every one ran to fetch his cards, dice, and chess, and having brought them to this public place, burned them with his own hand, in the presence of the chief of the republic. This terrible *auto-da-fe* brought a card-maker, who was ruined by St Bernard's sermon, to the holy man, saying with tears: 'Father, I am a manufacturer of cards; I have no other trade by which I can live: by hindering me from doing my work, you condemn me to die of hunger.' 'If you know how to paint,' was the reply, 'copy this image.' And he shewed him a sun surrounded by rays of glory, in the centre of which was the monogram of Christ, J.H.S. The card-maker followed his advice, and soon enriched himself by this painting, which St Bernard adopted for his symbol.

This was but a solitary instance, however, for every city in Italy drove a flourishing trade in the forbidden articles, so popular were they among all classes. A fresco at Bologna, painted in 1440, represents four soldiers playing at cards, done by Francesco Fibbia; and the year after, we find the celebrated card-makers of Venice complaining that the trade was departing out of their hands, in consequence of the great number of playing-cards with *painted* and *printed* figures which were introduced from other countries, and praying the senate to lay a tax on these foreign productions, whether printed on linen or paper. It may be well to

remark that here we have the first mention of printed cards, which probably came from Germany. A pack of these are still in existence engraved with the burin, which are supposed to be the work of Finiguerra or Mantegna, and at anyrate belong to this period of Italian art. It seems probable that they were made at Padua or Florence, and are imitations of the earliest Italian tarocchi, which vary somewhat from the cards now in use. The design is at once simple and good in outline, the engraving fine and harmonious; they are divided into five series, each of ten cards, and bear the names of the muses, the sciences, the heavenly bodies, and the virtues. The so-called cards of Charles VI. of France, which are now in the Bibliothèque du Roi in Paris, are probably the most ancient of any that are preserved in the various public collections of Europe. There are but seventeen, painted with all the delicacy of the miniatures in the illuminated manuscripts of the period, on a gold ground, and surrounded by a silver border, in which is a ribbon rolled spirally round done in points. It is to this that the cards owe their name of tarots, being marked in compartments, as we often see them in the present day, when the back is covered with arabesques.

These cards differ in some respects from the Italian ones already named, bearing neither numbers nor devices. There is the emperor in silver armour, a diadem of *fleurs-de-lis* on his head, and holding a globe and a sceptre; the pope with his triple crown, the Gospels and keys of St Peter in his hands, and seated between two cardinals; the crescent moon rises above two astrologers in long furred robes, who are measuring the conjunctions of the planets with compasses; the fool wearing a cap with asses' ears, and a deep pointed ruff round his neck, whilst four children are throwing stones at him; Death, mounted on a white horse, is throwing down kings, popes, and bishops; the House of God seems half devoured by flames; and finally, the last judgment shews us the dead rising from their tombs to the sound of trumpets. It will be seen that this game offered a philosophical representation of life from a Christian point of view: they might serve as a pastime for the poor king during his sad years of dark and furious madness, but would scarcely please his frivolous and corrupt court, where, notwithstanding the tumult of riots among the people, and civil discord dividing every class, it only occupied itself with pleasure, fêtes, masquerades, and tournaments, under the influence of a gallant and voluptuous chivalry. In this brilliant and refined court, which blinded itself to the gravity of political events, and tried to stifle with the sound of instruments, dances, and songs, the ferocious shouts of the populace in the *Halles*, the courtiers would assuredly decline to play with cards which reminded them of the solemnities of life. It was enough to meet with these sad subjects in the stained glass and sculptures of their churches, in the miniatures of their prayer-books, in the sermons of their preachers, and in the writings of religious men. In the orgies of the Queen Isabel of Bavaria, in the literary reunions of the Duke de Berri, in the jousts and passages of arms at the Duke de Bourbon's, they thought only of driving away care, whilst war, famine, and pestilence destroyed the kingdom.

On the other hand, these cards failed not to

strike most powerfully the simple and melancholy imaginations of the good people of Paris. For them, prepared as they were by mystical and religious allegory, they became a game of life and death; the moral idea of the inventor was at once understood, explained, and commented on. Here was a representation of man in the different states that birth assigned to him, or the condition where nature placed him; here the fool and the lover, there the pope and the emperor. Man, whatever his social rank might be, was to flee from the Tempter; to listen to religion as depicted by the Hermit; to attach himself to the virtues, valour, justice, and temperance, whilst pursuing fortune; for one day Death would come to lead him to the judgment of souls, and open to the just the home of God.

It is not unlikely that we may find here the origin of the famous Dance of Death—a terrible and philosophical 'morality,' which was first a poem, an allegory in prose or verse; and which soon became a pious spectacle, a scenic representation, accompanied by music and dancing, previously to the period when it furnished subjects and emblems for the pencil and the chisel. The first of these paintings was executed at Minden, in Westphalia, in the year 1385; it was contemporary with the earliest known cards or tarots. It was played or painted in Paris, according to the journal of a citizen of Paris, during the reign of Charles VI., in the Cemetery of the Innocents, in 1424. After that epoch, throughout all Europe, every cemetery, every church, every convent, must have its Dance of Death in painting, sculpture, or tapestry. This subject, funeral and burlesque at the same time, with which the eyes and minds of the people became so familiarised, frightened the rich and powerful, whilst it consoled and diverted the poor. Artists of every grade reproduced it in the greatest variety of forms; and even the ladies wore it in their jewellery. Both cards and the Dance of Death seem to be mixed up with the invention of xylography, or wood-engraving.

There remain the portions of two very old packs of cards engraved in wood which seem to have been made about 1423. They were discovered, like most of these relics, in the bindings of books. One of them contains eighteen cards, with figures upon them—six full length, and twelve only to the waist—without names or devices. There are in this pack some traces of a Saracen origin, which carry us back to the *naïb* of Viterbo. Thus, the crescent of the Mussulman replaces the diamond; the club is depicted in the Arab fashion—that is to say, quadrilateral, with four equal leaves; the king of hearts is a wild figure, clad in skins, like an ape leaning on a knotted staff; whilst the queen, dressed in the same rough attire, holds a torch in her hand; and there is another shaggy personage, who has unfortunately been divided into two by the knife of the binder. As the rest of the costumes belong to the period of Charles VII., and the crowns are adorned with *fleurs-de-lis*, we may perhaps believe that they are real portraits, with historical allusions. May they not have been painted as a memento of that fatal ball which Queen Blanche gave in honour of the marriage of the Chevalier de Vermandois, when six gentlemen, dressed in the costume of savages, rushed in, and were set on fire by the Duke of

Orleans, who, wishing to distinguish their countenances, held his torch too near to them, and four were burned to death? This *ballet des ardents*, as it was called, left the deepest impression upon the minds of the people, as the queen was accused of the dreadful expedient for getting rid of the king: and the *momon*, masquerade, which is still used in the game of lansquenet, may have owed its origin to these very cards.

It was at Bourges, in the château du Berri, that the game of piquet, which is especially the game of French cards, was invented, as tradition tells us, by the brave Lahire, as a pastime for Charles VII. The Italian tarots had long been known; but this new game was for the king of Bourges, as he was called, when he so carelessly withdrew there with his court and favourites, leaving half his kingdom in the hands of the English. As for the inventor, Etienne Vignoles, surnamed Lahire, he had ever his helmet on his head, and his lance in his hand, ready to do battle with his master's foes; and after a life spent in the field, he died of his wounds in 1442. The examination of these cards leads to the conjecture, that the author would depict the institution of chivalry; some of the names retain the Saracenic terms, such as Apollon, who appears in the romances of Charlemagne as the idol by which the Moors were accustomed to swear; and Corsuba, a knight of Cordova, whose name made many a Christian hero turn pale, and may have been a corruption of Cosroes, the general name for the kings of Persia. No doubt the companions of this indolent and voluptuous prince attached a personal sense to each character. Apollon might be Charles himself; the queen called 'Faith is lost' represented his wife, or Agnes Sorel; 'Sans Souci' was some resemblance to the goldsmith, Jaques Cœur, who was almost his master's equal in power, and his superior in riches; Corsuba would denote the king of England, the usurper of France; Roland, some of the brave captains, Richemont, Dunois, or Lahire; the queen 'Tromperie' (deceit), the dowager-queen Isabel, who had sacrificed her husband, son, and family to England; and finally, 'In thee I trust,' the name of one of the queens, alluded to Jeanne d'Arc. In some cases, the armorial bearings are adopted belonging to these persons and their colours. It was in this reign that devices, colours, and emblems were especially brought into fashion; and the celebrated book, the *Blason de Couleurs*, was drawn up by the herald of King Alfonso of Aragon, giving to each colour a special meaning, such as green, joy; black, simplicity; &c. Everything at this period was turned into an allegory, an emblem, or a moral.

It will be readily believed that such works of art as these early packs of cards were not accessible to the multitude, but were very costly, and only fit for kings and nobles. In an old account-book of the monarchs of France, we find that the treasurer paid in 1392 about eight pounds of our present money for three packs; and a single pack, exquisitely painted by Marziano, secretary to the Duke of Milan, cost, a few years later, fifteen hundred gold crowns. But as the more economical way of printing and engraving came into use, both which arts were known long before printing with movable types, the price of these coveted articles fell rapidly; and in 1454, a pack bought for the Dauphin cost no more than ten shillings. From

this time, the sale of cards fell into the hands of the mercers, who joined them to their traffic in long brass and silver pins, which were much worn by the ladies in those days. Thus, the accounts of the jeweller to Queen Marie of Anjou contain the following entry: 'On the 1st of October 1454, to William Bouchier, merchant, two games of cards and two hundred pins delivered to Monsieur Charles of France to play with and amuse himself, five sols tournois.'

As time passed on, the figures on the cards changed with the costume of the time, according to the caprices of the court or the imagination of the maker. The pointed beard, heavy collar, and plumed hat, appeared as the dress of the kings; the hair turned back and crimped, the lace collar, and the farthingale, as that of the queens. One old pack represents the four great monarchies—Jewish, Greek, Roman, and French, under the kings David, Alexander, Caesar, and Charlemagne; whilst the queens symbolise the manner of reigning—Judith by piety; Rachel by beauty; Pallas by wisdom; Argine, which is the anagram of Regina, by heirship; and the knaves the four ages of chivalry—Hector, the valiant Trojan chief; Agier, a paladin of Charlemagne; Lancelot, one of the twelve knights of Arthur's Round Table; and Lahire, the bold captain of Charles VII. The ace has borne many different interpretations: some imagined it to be the symbol of money for the payment of the troops, and derived it from the old Roman coin, giving it a power superior even to a king; others saw in it the first of the lower ten cards, and explained the name as coming from the Celtic *as*, signifying first or chief.

As regards England, though it received the game from a very early period through the trade it carried on with the Hanseatic and Dutch towns, yet it does not appear that any cards were manufactured here before the end of the sixteenth century, since under the reign of Elizabeth the government reserved to itself the monopoly of playing-cards imported from abroad. The oldest which are known, and which closely approach the early Italian packs, were discovered by Dr Stukely in the binding of a book. Unhappily, the originals have been destroyed; but correct drawings made at the time are in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries, and have been reproduced in Singer's work on the subject. They have been coarsely engraved and printed in two colours, green and brown, which were those usually employed by the German makers, whilst the French were indigo and vermillion. They mark a very early period, when the arts of drawing, engraving, and printing were in their infancy. Spain received from the Arabs and the Moors the eastern game of *naïf* long before cards were made at Viterbo; but when the latter became general, they excited the utmost enthusiasm in the country, and a passion for the play existed; so much so, that when the companions of Christopher Columbus, after their discovery of America, formed the first establishment in the island of San Domingo, they found nothing better to do than at once to manufacture cards from the leaves of trees.

The Germans, with their passion for symbolism, made many changes in the designs for cards, and sometimes employed them for the education of the young. One ancient pack remains in which the symbols are no longer taken from war, but from

hunting, falconry, and agricultural life; the mixture of bears and lions, stags, birds of prey, and flowers, is very curious. Another, executed by Martin Schongauer, and not less rare, reminding one of the shape of the cards, which are round, reminding one of the old Persian cards, painted on ivory, and loaded with arabesques, flowers, and birds.

In the time of George III., Horace Walpole tells us that everybody followed Hamlet's direction, and spoke 'by the card.' They were made the vehicles of messages of all kinds, and even reverend bishops would take up an ace of hearts to convey instructions on serious matters of business; some of which are still in existence. Caricatures, then a new species of satire, were sometimes drawn upon them, and ministers of state condescended to invent the devices; Charles Townshend himself caricaturing the trial of Admiral Byng so cleverly, that the pack was afterwards engraved.

It has often been asked why the nine of diamonds is called the 'Curse of Scotland,' and as an answer has lately been given by a writer in *Notes and Queries*, we may perhaps conclude this article by giving the three historical facts which he assigns as having caused the saying. In the distracted state of the country during the reign of Mary, a man, George Campbell by name, attempted to steal the crown out of Edinburgh Castle. In this he was unsuccessful, but managed to abstract nine valuable jewels, and escaped safely to a foreign shore. To replace these, a heavy tax was laid upon the country, which the poor oppressed people thought so great a grievance, that they termed it the curse of Scotland; and, until very recently, the card itself bore the name of George Campbell in the Highlands. The second explanation relates to the well-known massacre of Glencoe. The mandate for this cruel deed was signed by the eldest son of the Earl of Stair, who was at the time the Secretary of State for Scotland. The coat of arms belonging to this family bears nine diamonds on its shield, and the people, not daring to stigmatise the Master of Stair as the curse of Scotland, applied it to his armorial bearings. The last explanation relates to the battle of Culloden, which extinguished the hopes of the Stuart party, and was at the time considered a national curse. The Duke of Cumberland, who was known to have been a gambler, is said to have carried a pack of cards in his pocket; and when he had won the famous field, he took out the nine of diamonds, and wrote his account of the victory on it.

THE CRUISE OF THE ANTI-TORPEDO.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CONCLUSION.

EXPERIENCED as I was with the troubles of life, I had as yet never grappled with a Submarine Telegraph, and all the contrivances for such an enterprise were new to me. I had, however, in my boyhood tickled trout, and, later, watched the officers of the Royal Humane Society at their 'dreadful trade,'* and I endeavoured to combine these two experiences. Delicacy of movement and a firm clutch appeared to be the desiderata; and most fortunately we had a Turk's-head broom on board which was used for the ship's soundings. To this, hooks were attached in the usual manner, and with it we literally swept the Channel.

* Far worse than gathering samphire.

On the thirteenth day we caught a small crab. On the fourteenth, we hooked an electric eel. 'Come,' cried Grimbsy, rubbing his hands together, 'that is something like.' I could not help smiling at his simplicity and want of grammar.

On the fifteenth day, we came upon something very curious. We were apparently traversing the same track which the *Germania* had pursued when taking over William the Conqueror (jun.) and his suite to England; for we presently drew up all the obligations of international morality which he had thrown over in attacking us, wrapped up in the last rag of Bismark's self-respect. These curious articles are now in possession of the Microscopical Society. But I anticipate.

Days went on, and, though dreadfully sea-sick, I did not relinquish my search for a single instant. On the 31st April 1881, it being one of the roughest days I ever remember, I brought up the submarine cable. The excitement on board was beyond anything: a sort of hushed and reverential awe pervaded the whole crew, like that produced by the presence of royalty, or by fireworks. I cut the connection (which I had always regretted) between the continent and my beloved country, and applied the severed strands to my little battery. 'Now,' cried I triumphantly, 'we shall hear what these scoundrels are talking about to one another.'

Poor Grimbsy, taking my words in their literal sense, at once put his ear to the join, and was knocked down immediately, a message of importance happening at that moment to be upon its way. Most fortunately, my machine was a Bunsen's battery, so that I was enabled to translate from the German.

'From Moltke, Esquire, Berlin,' it ran, 'to the Busy Bee.'—[This was evidently for purposes of concealment; but my intelligence at once leaped to the conclusion that only one person could be intended—namely, the Wasp Bismark.] 'There has been a mass-meeting of young ladies here. They are much dissatisfied with the continued absence of the military in England, especially of the cavalry. I have put all the small trades-people into uniform; but it is complained that "they are not like the regulars;" "it is not the same thing," &c.; and especially, that "they waltz abominably." You must either all come back, or send for the young ladies. This is urgent.'

I forwarded this in its entirety; and in about two minutes I received this reply: 'The Busy Bee, Herne Bay, to Moltke, Esq.—Pooh, pooh! they won't hurt you. If opportunity occurs, please send the bowl of my large china pipe. It is in the second long drawer, or else under my bed.'

It was clear that the Prince made light of the *émeute*, and intended to enjoy himself. If we could only get him to cross over, and destroy him, or (what would be ever so much better) take him prisoner, our Queen might enjoy her own again, and (especially) leave Glasgow. For, Bismark gone, the German wits were gone; the nation, as everybody knows, would be nothing without him. No more in that vast empire would be heard the sound of the making of new (secret) treaties, or of the breaking of old (acknowledged) ones. The pur of the sewing-machine would supersede the ping of the needle-gun, and the manufacture of little boys' toys the 'agreeable rattle' of the captured mitrail-leuse; there would only be a gentle commotion caused by bringing spectacles out of their cases,

and the evolving of camels from each man's self-consciousness: the peaceful reign of German philosophy, in fact, which neither makes one nor breaks one, would recommence.

As I pondered over these things, and especially how we could get hold of Bismark, my cabin was suddenly illumined by phosphorescent light. I was quite accustomed, by this time, to such phenomena; the eye of a shark, when fixed on a human object, is phosphorescent, and I had been stared at by sharks for hours: the sword-fish (when drawn) has a shining appearance, and so has the pike at all times. But this was not a fish; it was merely a collection of rotten rubbish (phosphorescent from corruption), and which it took me some pains to discover, by the help of a magnifying-glass, was the ideas of his own Divine Right, which the free English air had, in spite of himself, blown out of the numskull of the German emperor. Now, it may be thought that nothing could possibly be made out of this: and yet, as it flashed upon me, so did my great plan for bagging Bismark, which was, in fact, suggested by it.

As some superexcellent Roman Catholics are more papistical than the Pope, so I knew that the Prince believed in the divine right of kings even more firmly than his master. He looked upon liberty as our county magistracy look upon a beer-license—a thing not to be intrusted to anybody who was not of his own political way of thinking. German unity having received its finishing touch by the absorption of England, there was no necessity for an idea of any sort. The very idea of an idea (and, above all, if it was in plain clothes) would fill him with alarm. If I could only persuade him that such a thing was gaining head in his native land—and I felt that this would be difficult—he would without doubt come home, at all hazards, to put his foot upon it. I determined, therefore, to date the telegram that was to bring him, from some German focus of intelligence. But where was such a place to be found? I thought of Berlin; but it had no association except with gloves. [I forgot, by the way, to mention that everybody had to appear at the English Opera in Berlin gloves, in order to encourage the manufacture.] I thought of Hamburg and Homburg, with their pressed beef and gaming-tables. I thought of Westphalia, but dismissed it from my mind immediately—I would not permit it to dwell upon anything but success. Where was a German focus of intelligence? Why, of course, in the neighbourhood of Gower Street, London. 'At the U, at the U, the University of'—

'You've got it then?' exclaimed Grimsby, who was anxiously watching my expressive countenance.

'I have now,' cried I; 'thanks to you.' The least clue will guide us in such cases, as is evidenced by the general use of *memoria technica*. It was the University of Göttingen.

It did not take me twenty-four hours to compose the following telegram: 'From Augusta to William (Imperator), Herne Bay.—An idea has broken out among the professors at Göttingen that their souls are their own. It is growing fast. Send Bizzy.' I felt pretty sure that he would understand this to mean Bismark; while, at the same time, it affected the familiarity of address that would most likely be used between the imperial pair.

The answer was flashed back as quick as thought:

not only was the characteristic economy of the sender lost sight of in his haste, as was shewn by the employment of expletives, but he had almost forgotten to be Puritanical.

'The deuce it has!' it began (referring doubtless to the breaking out of the idea): 'I mean, let us thank Heaven it is no worse. B. starts to-night in a fishing-smack, in order to escape the notice of that abominable *Anti-Torpedo*.'

Nothing could have been more gratifying to us than the receipt of this intelligence. Not only did it afford us good hope of securing our object, but informed us of the wholesome terror with which we had inspired our arch-enemy. Three cheers being imminent, Grimsby ordered sinking-drill, and they were given under water, for he felt that we could not take too great precautions in the way of secrecy. At the same time the article of war that prohibits a crew from hollering before they are out of the wood, was in no way contravened—the *Anti-Torpedo* being built of iron.

It was early in May, and quite soft were the skies, and it might be inferred that ourselves were likewise, from the pure and tender lily-tops which were all that was to be seen of our formidable craft, and from the fact of our selecting the vicinity of Herne Bay for our naval station; but the inference would have been erroneous. On a pitch-dark night, when scarce a wind was stirring, the Arch-diplomatist embarked; but for once his intelligence had failed him with respect to the description of vessel most suitable for eluding observation. We heard the smack as it put to sea. Even then, it might have escaped us, but for a shilling box of magnesian lights, which I had bought as a birth-day present for a little nephew, but had never had the opportunity of giving away: carefully scraped, and mixed with a few stalks of rhubarb, they had also served as domestic medicine for the crew, so that scurvy was quite unheard of amongst us. Upon striking the first light, we perceived that the name of the little vessel was the *Shy Customer*. She made a feint at escaping, but we fired a gun across her bows, and she was brought to, and came round at once. The crew were ordered on board, and professed themselves to be fishermen: they had red caps and Guernsey shirts, and smelled abominably of shrimps; but we were not thrown off our guard by such devices, nor deterred from our duty by considerations of inconvenience. In the pocket of one of them we found a German flute, which disclosed their nationality. Every man swore positively that he was not Bismark, and our suspicions naturally settled upon him who swore the hardest. Photographs, and even daguerotypes, were used in vain to extort the secret. He had shaved his moustaches and let his hair grow, and but for a certain significant *twitching of the left eyelid* (which he could not restrain when he thought that we had done with him and were about to let him go), and which I knew to be characteristic of the man, there was nothing by which he could be identified. Lawyers would have disputed for forty days about this twitching, but the ways of seamen are more expeditious. As the suspected person had no pocket-handkerchief, we were compelled—for in writing history there should be no false delicacy—to examine his under-garment: upon it was embroidered a Busy Bee.

'Gentlemens,' cried he, 'it is de one trade-mark of de Linen Company, dat is all.'

'No,' said I (rather happily, as I have often thought since); 'it is the *Bismark*.'

Then he saw that he was discovered, and, actuated by despair, offered us five shillings apiece to let him go.

Of course we kept him; and not knowing where else to put him, and being reasonably alarmed lest his diabolical ingenuity should furnish him with the means of escape, we turned our Big Gun mouth downwards over him, like a wine-glass over an earwig, and fed him through the touch-hole.

Then we returned the smack to his imperial master with this *ultimatum*.

England to be evacuated within ten days, and all silver spoons and forks (which he had boasted 'should not be returned') to be delivered up to their rightful owners.

There were other items; but, in a word, he was to DISGORGÉ, or woe to his beloved *Bismark*! The compilation of this Treaty 'Between Samuel Grimsby of the *Anti-Torpedo* on the one side, and His Imperial Majesty, &c. on the other,' being a style of composition with which I was not familiar, engrossed my best attention for some hours, and it also had to be engrossed on vellum. But at last all was completed, and we sailed for Mid Channel to await His Majesty's reply. Unfortunately, in the excitement of the moment, when we received his late telegram, we had dropped the cable overboard, and communication with the Continent had been thereby re-established. On the date which we had appointed for the surrender, instead of a gig or other peaceful vehicle emerging from the roads of Dover, as we had fondly hoped, the sea was positively darkened by Iron-clads. It had been determined by one combined effort of the Continental Navies (Unlimited) to destroy the *Anti-Torpedo*.

Though our Gun was rendered useless as a weapon, by having been converted into a lock-up, not a single monosyllable escaped our gallant captain's lips, as this overwhelming force drew nigh; he only whistled softly to himself, and by the way in which he placed his finger on the side of his nose, evinced that he felt fully equal to the situation.

'All hands to sinking-drill,' cried he, when these armadæ (for there were five of them) were within about half a submarine cable's length of us.

Then ensued a frightful catastrophe.

'Sir,' said the first-lieutenant gravely, and touching his hat, after the men had worked with a will for more than double the usual time without effect, 'it is all very easy to say: "All hands to sinking-drill;" but we can't sink. Something has gone wrong with the machinery.'

'What is the meaning of it?' cried the captain, looking to everybody for an explanation.

'Please, sir,' cried a still small voice (it was that of the call-boy), 'I see Mr *Bismark* a-meddling with it with my own eyes.'

Instead of flying into a rage with the lad for not opening his mouth before, as I should have done, Grimsby patted him on the head, and said: 'Quite right; little boyth should never thepeak unless they are thspoken to. Bring up the Great Gun.'

How *Bismark* had got out of it, none of us knew. Our captain did not allude to the fact in any way, nor did he adopt any retaliatory measures upon the Prince for his meddling behaviour (which

after all was second nature to him). We were all going to the bottom together in a few minutes, so what did it signify. In the meantime, the gallant Grimsby took his cocked-hat off, and made us a farewell address.

'You have all heard of the Phocianth,' he began, 'a gallant race who, being overcome and dethtroyed, yet furnished forth one thip, which (or rather the tenantht of which) colonised another Phocis in a far-distant land, and re-ethtblashed their nation elthewhere. It wath my dream that we thould do the like for England; but we have failed. We shall have one or two shots at these scoundrelth, and then all our fun will be over. As to thtriking our flag, the idea is prepothterous; we have no mast to which to nail it; but—see—I have done my betht to pretherve it from that degradation.' Here he shewed us the Union-jack pinned behind him; it could never be struck *there*, so long as he kept his face to the foe, which it was his fixed intention to do. 'Mister Ann, Mister Ann!' cried the captain, suddenly interrupting himself, and addressing the lieutenant by name, 'do you thee anything coming from *that* direction?' and he pointed to the south-west, whence a *sixth* armada could plainly be seen approaching.

'Yes, sir, please, sir, it is the Yankee navy,' returned that officer, touching his hat. 'What matters a navy more or less?'

'What matterth, thir? A great deal matterth,' returned our fiery chief. 'To think that our own counthinh should have made league against us with these rabbithy foreigners, is the last drop in England'th bitter cup.—Load the Gun, and steer for the thtars and thtripes: while there's a shot in the locker, I don't command thith craft if they don't have it.' The captain resumed his cocked-hat, and calmly sat down (on the binnacle) amid cheers.

Twenty years ago, or so, it was true that, among a certain section, though by no means among the majority, of Englishmen there was shewn a want of sympathy with the Americans in their intestine troubles; but that this should have been remembered so long against us, and have borne this bitter fruit at a time when the very existence of the Anglo-Saxon race in Europe was threatened, filled us all with the utmost loathing and desperation. We bore down upon the largest ship, which led their advance squadron, a huge iron-clad. She was as certain to be in minute fragments within five minutes, with the loss of every soul on board, as that her name was the *Columbia*; but it was doubtful whether we should have time to reload.

'What is she arter, drat her?' murmured Lieutenant Ann, who was himself adjusting the Big Gun. 'She's shewing something white; I'm boiled if it ain't the white-feather.'

'Then you *are* boiled,' observed our captain coolly: 'the Yankees have never shewn that yet, whatever they've done. Avast there with that telescope. They're waving a white flag; belay the signal-book. Let's see what they've got to say for themselves.'

'America will never see Old England kicked to death by cripples.'

'Ith that really it?' exclaimed the veteran (he was exactly eight-and-thirty, as I knew by my own age). 'My eyeth are dimmed with tearth, and be dimmed to them. Thignal: "Thanks, counthinh, and right you are."'

Then, through the speaking-trumpet of the

Yankee captain, rang these stirring words, rendered more nasal than usual by reason of the medium through which they were conveyed, but leal, and true, and grand: 'Form line of battle; dress; *America and Old England against the world.* The stars for us, the stripes for them; darn 'em.—Captink' [this to the gallant Grimsby], 'I kalkilate, if you could only ha' got well down to your work, that you might ha' done this little job alone: but you and I together.—Wall, I'll bet. If any nobleman, or gentleman, or person of landed property, has a few dollars to sport upon this coming event, and would like to back the field against the two favourites of civilisation, I shall be proud to humour him. Captink, you are used to lead; lead us aginst that larboard lot—the Rusho-Prusho-thingamies. Our people, yonder, will make short work of the Mounseers.' At this critical moment the call-boy informed us that the machinery had got into gear again, so that we were, in fact, once more masters of the situation. But Grimsby had too great a soul to mention it. Cousin Jonathan had held his hand out to us under the idea that we were sinking, and it would have been ungracious to undeceive him.

The engagement which succeeded belongs to universal history. Every schoolboy knows how it came to pass that continental Europe does not now possess a navy. It was blown by Great Grimsby and the Yankees into lucifer-matches. Everybody knows how the Germans in England surrendered at discretion, but were allowed, by the magnanimity of their late foes, to retain their pipes and lights, and their attachment to their own country.

Looking upon the whole affair with dispassionate eyes, the short-lived occupation of Great Britain was a positive advantage to both parties. The Germans learned manners; the use of forks and spittoons; and to mind their own business. We English have, perhaps, been even more signally benefited. From the highest to the lowest of us, we have all received a lesson. 'None, now, are for a party, but all are for the state.' The occupation of the agitator is gone. Shoulder to shoulder—or arm in arm, if a lady is in the case—we stand united against all comers, except the Yankees; every member of that branch of our family is always received with drums beating, colours flying, and a salute of the same number of guns (which I forget) as there are stars in the American flag.

Our gracious Queen, emancipated from Glasgow, is only too glad to remain in London, whenever her royal presence there is desirable. The Prince of Wales never sees a pigeon without a shudder. (It was true he had never shot one, but he had spent a good deal of time in trying to do so, and all that is over now.) The aristocracy have given up betting, and become useful members of society. In fact, thanks to that sharp lesson taught by humiliation and defeat, there is a total change for the better in our National Life.

Every man in the service of the state who neglects his duties, is turned out of his post, and every post—if, at least, it is post-paid—has personal responsibilities attached to it. In the first outburst of patriotic indignation, it was resolved to hang official persons convicted of this offence; but as the effect of this edict was at once to decimate the Civil Service, and to threaten the authorities at the War Office and Admiralty with extinction, milder views prevailed.—To return, however, to the

Anti-Torpedo, to which alone this narrative properly belongs. Most of us have doubtless seen that noble craft laid up in extraordinary, and wrapped in gun-cotton wool, in the centre transept of Westminster Abbey. The crew have expressed a wish to be buried there, but not until they have deceased, and I am glad to say we never lost a man. The only casualty on board occurred from a squabble between two of the gun-room officers, one of whom had been taunted by the other as being his German cousin. The statement was correct; but unable to bear the stigma of denationalisation implied by such a relationship, he snatched up a lee scupper, and inflicted a slight scalp-wound on his involuntary kinsman.

It may savour of personal vanity to record how all of us—even to the supernumerary mate—were fêted and caressed; how models of our curious little vessel were made in gold and silver and platinum (a very rare metal), and worn as a charm by our dear countrywomen, or as a scarf-pin by males. A single example will suffice to shew the enthusiasm with which our conduct was regarded. Out of compliment to the gallant Grimsby—Great Grimsby, as he was now entitled by letters-patent—*everybody affected to lisp*. In the churches, in the law-courts, on parade, there was not an *s* to be heard; simony was practically abolished; nobody spoke of the law of settlement; the familiar injunction: 'Shoulder arms!' was superseded by the words: 'Put your best leg foremost.' Even people who dropped their *hs*, dropped the *s* also, though, of course, they could ill afford to lose another letter from their already limited vocabulary. The national sarcasm: 'How are you off for Soap!' applied (not without reason) by the youth of London to all foreigners, dropped into disuse; and in place of it was substituted the pregnant phrase: 'How are you off for *Anti-Torpedo*h?'

CECIL'S TRYST.

CHAPTER XV.—WHAT THE 'TOP' SAID.

If the progress of civilisation is to be measured, as many would have it, by the number of newspaper readers, we were not in a very advanced stage of it at Gatcombe Manor. My father, indeed, was wont to divide the world into two classes—those who believed in the newspapers, and those who did not; and I am afraid the former class were in his eyes identical with the fools, and the latter with the wise men. That excellent weekly local journal, the *Mangel Wurzel News*, without which no Conservative breakfast-table could be said to be complete upon a Saturday, was, in fact, the only newspaper we took in; and it was therefore a great surprise to us, on the morning after the events I have just described, to find in our letter-bag the *Sandylandshire Turnip Top*, a newspaper whose circulation, in Gatcombe at least, had been hitherto confined to the Rectory. It was the county Radical organ, and was supposed to advocate 'advanced opinions'; the difference between it and its rival consisting, however, mainly in the fact, that the former was in favour of the parvenu gentry of the neighbourhood, and the latter of the old county families. The *Top* (as it was irreverently termed by its opponents) was always asking, for instance, how long the infamous hereditary principle was to exclude such a man as John Bourne of Gatcombe

from the list of deputy-lieutenants for Sandylandshire. For the Alchemist had money in every good investment that offered, and the *Top* was a very thriving concern. My father, who was no more a Tory than he was an ichthyosaurus, used to chuckle over this particular grievance, and to aver that it caused him to have a better opinion of the 'hereditary principle' than any argument he had seen advanced in its favour; but Aunt Ben, who was *Mangel Wurzel* (or True Blue) to the backbone, would have had the *Top* burned in the market-place by the common hangman, if market-places and common hangmen had been articles on hand.

'Why, good gracious, Frederick, here's the *Top*!' cried she in horror, taking the unclean thing from the letter-bag, and holding it between her finger and thumb. 'Who could have sent it to us? Pah, pah! it should be thrown into the kitchen fire.'

'Let it be fumigated,' said my father gravely, 'but not burned. It may perhaps have an account of our theatricals in it, and a criticism upon *Ivanhoe*.'

'Not it,' said Aunt Ben scornfully; 'and, besides, that would have been in last week's paper, if at all.'

But the idea of being in print, even in the *Top*, fired all my soul, and I snatched at the paper with trembling fingers, and put it in my pocket. A natural instinct suggested an adverse verdict, and I did not wish to let the public mark my agonies while the barb worked in my soul. It is said that one of the most trying experiences in connection with a literary career is one's first review—the first notice taken in a public print of one's novel or poem; but I am inclined to think that the ordeal is even still more severe in the case of a dramatic aspirant; for he who writes a drama, writes for the public only, and cannot comfort himself with the fond delusion that if a failure on the stage, his work will be perused by private persons. In the case of a novel, if the critics (confound them!) do band themselves together to decry it, there is still an appeal to Mrs Jones and Mrs Brown: whatever its artistic shortcoming, it may still have its attractions, and secure success in despite of the hebdomadal arbiters of fame; but when a play is condemned upon the boards, it is not only hopeless to imagine that it will be read in the closet, but no advantage even if it is. I felt that if *Ivanhoe* was damned in the *Top*, the term would have all the significance that it has in theology.

I had fortunately eaten my breakfast, for otherwise a piece of toast would have now choked me, and at once retired to my own room. Then I took the newspaper out, and looked at it still folded; gazed forebodingly at its frontispiece, the Banner of Freedom, which protruded itself on either side of the wrapper, and felt as though Fame, Fortune, Fate—my Future, in fact, whether for good or ill—were all inscribed within that (sixpenny) roll. The idea, of course, was absurd, the position ludicrous; but it was no joke to me. And looking back upon that incident after the experience of a lifetime, I must allow there was at least as much cause for gravity as in many another juncture of affairs which has hinged on an equally imaginary pivot. It is not the most grave matters that concern us the most seriously, but those which most nearly affect our *amour propre*.

The *Mangel Wurzel News* in its last week's issue had informed its readers, under the unpromising head of *Miscellaneous*, that 'At Gatcombe Manor, the seat of Frederick Wray, Esq., a dramatic entertainment, at which Lady Repton (once the famous *tragedienne* of the London boards) had kindly assisted, had been given to the tenantry of the estate;' surely a most unsatisfactory and insufficient notice of that great event; and if the *Turnip Top* should now shew itself alive to the future interests of the British drama, I was quite prepared to discard a foolish prejudice, and take the editor—and his principles, too, if necessary—to my beating heart. How it did beat, and how sick I felt, it is quite impossible to depict in words. And all the time the *Top* contained not one single syllable about the matter. But I anticipate.

While I still turned over the fateful journal in my hands, entered Cousin Cecil, smiling. 'Well, Fred., what does it say? What! have you not opened it?'

'No,' said I. 'Don't laugh at me, please; but open it yourself, and tell me.'

'My dear Fred.,' returned he, in a tone of remonstrance (but then it was not *his* play), 'why, what does it matter?'

He sat down, crossing his legs unconcernedly, and tore the paper open with irreverent fingers.

'Under what head will it be, Fred.?—The *Drama*? or *Gatcombe*? or *Accidents and Offences*? Eh? I don't see a word about it.' Suddenly his roving eyes were arrested, and an expression of intense interest came over his features.

'Have you found it, Cecil? Don't read it to yourself. Pray, let me hear it' (for I saw it was no good news). 'Whatever it is, I can bear it from your lips.'

'Listen, then,' answered my cousin, with a mocking laugh that made my blood freeze. 'It is not a paragraph that I am about to read you, but a leading article—the first in the paper; the one that everybody must needs read. Some kind friend has, however, marked it with two crosses, so that we should not miss it.'

'Beast!' observed I, parenthetically. 'But what is it called?'

'*Gross Miscarriage of Justice*.—It is our painful duty to comment upon certain proceedings before the magistrates' bench at Holksham, a detailed account of which will be found in another portion of our paper. They illustrate so completely the evils attendant upon that system of subservience to the lords of the soil which it has always been our proudest mission to expose, that we cannot forbear to dwell upon them, unwilling as we are to wound the feelings of a family, which, notwithstanding it has already contained one notable *mauvais sujet* ['That is my father, I suppose,' interpolated Cecil bitterly], 'has been hitherto widely respected. It would be affectation to conceal the name; we refer to the Wrays of Gatcombe. A coroner's jury brought in last week a verdict of Wilful Murder against some person or persons unknown. The next day, one of the culprits gave himself up to justice, and yesterday repeated in open court the confession which he had already made, somewhat informally, as it appears, to the constable who arrested him. So far the case seems clear; nor would there, we apprehend, have been the slightest difficulty in the matter, but for the social position of another person implicated in the

prisoner's statement. True, it is averred that the culprit in custody is of weak intellect, but even if it be so, it is hard to see how his words should be permitted to weigh against himself, and yet lose their force when directed against his (alleged) accomplice. He charges Mr Cecil Wray of Gatcombe (son of the late Thomas Wray, of whose conduct the Liberal party had such bitter cause to complain at the time when this county first threw off the yoke of Tory servitude) with direct participation in the crime of which he confesses himself to be guilty; declares that he was bribed by him to steal the props, the removal of which caused the sand-pit to fall in upon Richard Waller, and produces the very gold which (as he alleges) was paid him for that purpose. Far be it from us to press harder on this young gentleman than the case demands; let us be careful to add that in one particular, the date, Mr Cecil Wray was able to disprove this statement. But with that exception, it must surely be admitted that the case is a strong one—far too strong to be readily discarded from the minds of honest men, even though summarily dismissed by the county magnates sitting in judgment at Holkham—one of whom, shameful to narrate, was no other than the uncle of the young gentleman thus implicated. We put it to our readers, whether, if Bill Styles or Thomas Noakes had been the persons pointed out as his accomplices by the unhappy prisoner at the bar, they would have been suffered to leave the court, not without a stain, indeed (for the stain of blood will remain where it has been indicated till this matter has undergone a thorough investigation), but without measures being taken to insure their subsequent attendance if required. One voice, indeed, that of Mr Bourne of Gatcombe, was raised from the bench itself on behalf of evenhanded justice; but it was overborne; the principle of family influence triumphed, and Mr Cecil Wray is still at large. Of course, it is possible that he may abide at home, in readiness to meet the renewal of this grave charge at the assizes, or elsewhere. But it would be a dereliction of our public duty not to point out that he may also remove himself from the jurisdiction of the law, if he so pleases; and also to remind our readers that it would not be the first time that a member of the proud race of Wray has similarly eluded justice.

'What does this man mean by that?' inquired Cecil sternly.

He saw I hesitated.

'For Heaven's sake, tell me, Fred. There is nothing left me now to hear which can make life more bitter.'

'It is, I suppose,' said I, 'a cruel and exaggerated reference to some election trouble with which your father was concerned. All this is mere venom, my dear Cecil, which has doubtless been ranking in this blackguard's mind for years. Perhaps my uncle horsewhipped him twenty years ago; and I'll do it again myself before he is three days older.'

'No, no,' said Cecil sadly. 'You can never horsewhip *this* away, dear Fred;': then suddenly casting down the paper: 'Great Heaven!' cried he despondingly, 'what have I done to have earned such punishment as this!'

'Dear Cecil,' said I, 'don't give way thus. What does it matter (as you yourself just said to me) if a toad-like thing, such as the *Top*, does spit its

venom? No one who knows you, or it, will be affected by such rubbish. And, besides, as I heard my father say to you last night, a few days hence, and, in all probability, the truth will be known, and we shall laugh at all these slanders.'

'I feel as if I should never laugh again,' groaned Cecil. 'Hush!' He started to his feet, then added hastily: 'That is your father's step. Put away the paper, lest his noble heart should suffer hurt from that base weapon.'

However stricken and past further harm, poor Cecil felt, as far as he was himself concerned, he could still feel for others.

'Well, Fred, what does the critic of the *Top* say?' inquired my father cheerily. 'To judge from your looks, the infidel dog has damned your *Ivanhoe*.'

It was touching in him (knowing, as I did, how he despised such matters) to have come to inquire how the paper had handled my poor play.

'They have not mentioned it at all, sir,' said I ruefully enough.

'Tut, tut! That is bad, Fred. Still they might have abused it (for the *Top* does not love our family); and not to be famous is better, after all, than to be infamous; is it not, Cecil?'

This unlucky question, and its direct appeal, was too much for my unhappy cousin; he strove to reply, but could not, then burst into tears.

'It is Cecil who has been wounded by what the paper says, and all of us through him,' said I, in answer to my father's inquiring look. 'There is a scandalous article against the Wrays, founded upon Batty's statement before the bench. I think you had better not read it, sir.'

'My dear Fred,' said my father, with a look of quiet scorn, 'have you known me all these years to such little purpose as to suppose anything written in a newspaper could move me! Let me read what this able editor has written about us. He sees the necessity of his living, remember, though it may not impress us with the same force.'

'Don't read it, sir, oh, pray, don't read it,' pleaded Cecil passionately; 'nobody who reads it can ever think well of me again.'

The hand which Cecil warningly interposed, my father took, and tenderly retained throughout the perusal of the article; when he had read it, he quietly ejaculated: 'Hang him, Rook!' which was his favourite quotation when annoyed with any one, and put the paper into his pocket. 'What does Suckling say about such fellows?' murmured he, musing.

'Thou vermin Slander, bred in abject mind

Of thoughts impure, by vile tongues animate,

Canker of our prized Freedom, couldst thou find

Nought but our love whereon to shew thy hate?'

This strikes through you at us, my lad, else we should not feel it; and what you suffer, remember, is the measure of our hurt, so, for our sakes, wear a bold front. Neither your sister nor your Aunt Ben must read this rubbish. Light a match, and burn it, Fred.'

Then laying his broad palm on Cecil's head, just as though he had been a child, and patting it encouragingly, my father left the room, wounded, as I believe, to the very quick; for his philosophy was reserved for his own affairs: in what concerned those who were dear to him—whether dead or alive—he was only too sensitive.

CHAPTER XVI.—BATTY MAKES NO SIGN.

The pleasure of inflicting pain on others, even though they be not our enemies, is not unhappily confined to the breast of the British schoolboy. It exists more or less in all low human natures, though (with the doubtful exception of the kitten who has caught a mouse) not, I believe, among the brutes. To whose good offices we were indebted for that copy of the *Turnip Top*, we never knew, but several kind female friends were good enough that very day to call and condole with Aunt Ben upon its 'abominable' contents. They were distressed above measure at the disgraceful attack upon her respected family; and while confessing that the insult was beneath contempt, very solicitous that 'something should be done.'

'Perhaps you had better make your kind suggestion to my brother,' was Aunt Ben's grim reply, at which these well-meaning ladies gathered up their skirts and retired precipitately. If my aunt suffered, she did so, like the North American Indian at the stake, without moving a muscle.

'I always told you, Fred., what the *Turnip Top* was like,' observed she calmly.

Nor, strange to say, did Cousin Jane give any outward sign of exasperation, beyond the recommendation of her usual panacea for all offenders. 'He ought to be whipped,' said she through her shut lips.

'What! the *Top*?' returned my father, smiling. 'Well, that seems very appropriate.'

'No, the editor,' answered Cousin Jane.

'My dear, if the paper had been burned, as I have always advised,' said Aunt Ben gravely, 'in some public place, by the common— But hush! here comes your brother.'

By tacit consent, not a word was said about the matter in Cecil's presence. It was idle to expect him to forget it—indeed, it was plain to all of us that he thought of nothing else; but we strove to persuade him that we ourselves made light of it. Those days that succeeded the magistrates' meeting at Holksham were very sad ones, their darkness relieved only by a sort of lurid expectation derived from the coming trial. What disclosure would it bring about? What course would Batty's scanty wits induce him to take? Would he persist in his present story, and, above all, would his possession of the gold be, by any other means than it, accounted for? If that could be done, his curious hallucination as respected Cecil must needs be taken by everybody—even by the editor of the *Top*—for what it was really worth. In the meantime, Cecil kept at home, shrinking from every eye.

The rector called again, with the intention, as before, of expressing to him the kindly feelings by which he was personally animated towards him, and of disavowing all participation with his father's conduct on the bench. But, to the regret of us all (save one), Cecil refused to see him; not, as I honestly believe, through anger, but because he really felt unequal to the interview. His nerves were shaken to their centre, and he might well decline to listen to any allusion to the cause; and, moreover, perhaps he dreaded that Mr Bourne, in his injudicious zeal, might even have something to say upon another subject, quite as delicate, and just now hardly less painful.

The exception I have referred to was Cousin

Jane. She expressed her conviction that Cecil was quite justified in his objection to hold any communication with the Rectory people—a condemnation sweeping enough, and which was made so, as I well understood, in order to include Eleanor.

The longest days drag themselves out somehow, and that preceding the assize at Monkton came round at last. My father had engaged lodgings in the city for Cecil, himself, and me, and we were to drive thither early in the morning. Dinner—a meal now almost untouched—was over; it was a beautiful evening, but Cecil had retired as usual to his own room, while Aunt Ben and Jane had taken their work out into the stone verandah that ran round the front of the Manor-house, and my father had joined them with his book. I was lying on the grass in front of them, elaborating a dramatic plot, into which the incident of stealing props from a sand-pit would perpetually intrude, like King Charles I. into Mr Dick's memorial, when my eye caught the flutter of a white dress in the winding avenue. I rose in quite a leisurely manner, and walked into the house through the opened drawing-room window.

'He's got an idea,' observed my father, 'and is going to write it down;' and called out to me: 'Are you sure it's your own, Fred.?'

'I believe so, sir,' said I demurely; then, once out of their sight, ran round to the front door, and met my Eleanor. She was pale, notwithstanding that she had also been running; and I knew by her sweet eyes that she was the bearer of some serious intelligence. 'What is it,' said I, 'my darling; for I see you have brought news?'

'I have,' answered she, almost breathless.

'Don't be in a hurry,' said I. 'Take time, and refresh yourself' (here we interchanged the refreshment of a kiss). 'It must be good news to me, at all events, since it brings you here.'

'I hardly know whether it is good or bad,' replied she; 'it's' (here she looked up quickly at an upper window; it was my cousin's, and there he stood, waving his hand, and trying to smile in his old fashion)—'Oh, good gracious! why, he must have seen us,' whispered Nelly in great confusion.

'Never mind, my darling,' said I assuringly. 'If he did, it only reminded him of somebody else's kisses; and even the recollection must be welcome to him, poor fellow, in his present trouble.'

'Ah, yes; it is about that that I am come, Fred. I was not told to do so, and perhaps I ought not; but I could not bear that you should be kept in suspense an hour longer than was necessary. News has just arrived from Monkton—terrible news; and yet, though it is so shocking, perhaps it will put an end to all this dreadful trouble. Poor Batty has committed suicide—hanged himself in his cell.'

'Good Heavens! are you quite sure that this is true?' I had no doubt that it was so; but asked the question mechanically, in order to give time for my own thoughts to work. Was this catastrophe for Cecil's advantage or not? On the one hand, it would quash further proceedings; on the other hand, it would leave the question of Batty's having had a confederate a mystery more impentrate than ever.

'O yes, it's true,' said Nelly. 'The village

constable himself, who had just returned from Monkton, whither he went this morning, to be in readiness for the trial to-morrow, brought word of it to grandpapa; and here a blush betrayed that she was not ignorant of the reason which scandal at least had suggested for old Mr Bourne's interest in Batty's fate.

'Let us come and tell my father,' said I gravely: 'they are all in the verandah. Did you hear any cause assigned for the poor creature's putting an end to himself?'

'He had pined and fretted ever since he was committed to jail. Having always lived in the open air, he could not endure the confinement, it seems; at least there was no other reason given.'

Here we rounded the corner of the house, and came in sight of the party I had just left. Jane rose at once, as if to go indoors; but I called out to her that Nelly had brought news about the trial, and she stopped at once, like one changed to stone, with a foot upon the window-sill, and her hand pressed to her breast.

'Good Heavens! what is it?' cried Aunt Ben. 'Have they found the man who bribed poor Batty?' For my aunt, who, of all of us, knew Batty best, by reason of her ministrations in the village, had not a doubt that his tale was so far true.

'If they have found him,' said Jane sarcastically, 'they must be very clever. It is much more likely that they have discovered Batty to be more knave than fool.'

'He is dead!' said Eleanor simply. 'He hanged himself this morning in his cell in Monkton jail.'

'The Lord have mercy on him!' ejaculated Aunt Ben; 'and I think He will, for I don't believe the poor soul meant harm. Indeed, his leaving life in that way shews him to have been mad.'

'Or guilty,' said Jane coldly. 'Indeed, we know as much as that already. Well, I confess, for my part, I am very glad;' and she looked so.

'O Jane!' said my aunt reprovingly; 'we should surely never rejoice in a fellow-creature's death.'

'Fellow-creature! Why, even according to your own shewing, Aunt Ben, he was an idiot.'

'Hush, hush!' said my father quietly. 'It has been categorically proved of late that the intellectual difference between idiots and persons of average ability is not so great as that between Shakspeare and the same persons; so let us avoid all narrow views of fellow-creatureship.'

'Did poor Batty die without further sign, Eleanor? I mean, is it said that he made any communication as respected this unhappy charge?'

This was a question which, of course, went home to us all; yet Jane, whom one would have expected, on her brother's account, to be the most concerned, seemed the most indifferent to it. Instead of shewing the hushed anxiety of 'hand and eye,' that manifested itself in Aunt Ben, my cousin stepped within the drawing-room as Eleanor was about to speak, and there remained, in shadow, only just so long as sufficed to hear her reply.

'Batty is said to have remained obstinately silent ever since his committal,' was the answer. 'It was with difficulty they could even persuade him to take his meals.'

There was an awkward silence, during which the closing of the drawing-room door informed us that my cousin had withdrawn into the house.

'It is strange how lightly Jane has always treated a matter that has so deeply affected her brother,' observed Aunt Ben. 'But I suppose this sad end of poor Batty, and his silence, rather bears out her view that the unhappy lad was even more witless than we imagined, and his statement mere wild and wandering talk.—Don't you think so, Frederick?'

'So far as his words went,' answered my father doubtfully, 'that would be so, supposing they were unsupported by any other evidence; but there is still his possession of the money to be accounted for, and I confess it puzzles me. It is too large a sum not to be missed if he had stolen it from any of our neighbours. If the gold had changed to dry leaves, as in the Arabian tale, it would only seem in accordance with so strange and weird a story; but there it is still, a solid fact.'

'But you don't surely think that this matter will still continue to be a trouble to us?' inquired Aunt Ben disconsolately. 'I am sure poor dear Cecil has fretted himself about it more than enough already.' It is my belief that it is having a serious effect upon his health.

'Yes; he will need change,' said my father thoughtfully: 'a thorough change will be good for him on all accounts.'

'You are not thinking of sending the boy away from home?' cried my aunt in alarm, for she was much attached to Cecil. 'Well, I do really agree with Jane, that that is making far too much of the matter. I did hope, after what has just happened, that there would be an end of it for good and all.'

'I am afraid not,' said my father seriously; 'for the fact is, it is only natural that the sudden end of this poor creature should give his statement a greater force than it had when he was alive. I had great hopes that to-morrow's trial would have somehow elucidated the truth; whereas now—though I would not for the world that Cecil should hear me say it—the matter is more mysterious and grave than ever, since all is left to be proved and disproved.'

'You are right, sir,' said a piteous voice, that sent a thrill through us all; and there stood Cecil immediately before us—whose approaching footsteps on the grass had made no sound. It was easy to read in his pale and haggard face that he had heard my father's words, and that they had come upon him like the words of doom. 'You are quite right, sir,' repeated he. 'God help me!'

LITERARY REMUNERATION.

LITERATURE has been described as a good walking-stick, but a bad crutch; but the examples of literary remuneration we shall give in the present paper shew that some, at least, have found it a very good crutch indeed. The labourer is worthy of his hire; and we think a few carefully selected examples of the prices some of the masterpieces of our literature have brought their authors cannot fail to be interesting to our readers.

It seems almost incredible that Shakspeare and Milton only received five pounds each for such works as *Hamlet* and *Paradise Lost*; but in those days an author laboured under many disadvantages, which were obviated as time went on and

the reading circle increased. Persons who wrote for a living generally wrote for the stage, though the remuneration was small. Thomas Heywood, who is said to have written more than two hundred plays, in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., only had three pounds, in 1602, for *A Woman killed with Kindness*, from Henslowe. The *Diary* of the latter, published by the Shakspeare Society, contains a great deal of information respecting the prices paid for plays. The dresses seem to cost a great deal more, in proportion, than the cost of the copyright of the play. More was paid, for example, when *A Woman killed with Kindness* was acted, for a gown for the heroine than for the play itself. Henslowe paid Ben Jonson and Dekker, for a play called *The Page of Plymouth*, in 1599, eleven pounds; for Dekker's *Medicine for a Curs'd Wife*, in 1602, ten pounds; and, three years before, L.9. 10s. for *Patient Grissill*. On one occasion (1599), two pounds was paid a printer to prevent the printing of the latter play. No wonder few old plays have been preserved. On August 3, 1613, we find Daborne, the dramatic author, complaining that from twenty pounds a play he had come to twelve pounds; so that it appears, if he had received the former sum, prices had risen since 1602. Henslowe agreed to give him the latter sum for the *Bellman of London*.

Afterwards, authors shared the profits of a play, for it is said that Shadwell (1640—1692) cleared one hundred and thirty pounds by a single representation of the *Squire of Alsatia*; and Southern (1660—1746) made seven hundred pounds by one play. In the *Isabella* of the latter author, Mrs Siddons made her debut at Drury Lane in 1782. Dryden does not seem to have made so much by his plays; and thought himself lucky if one brought him one hundred pounds. Tonson published his translation of Virgil, which gained Dryden twelve hundred pounds; but for his *Fables*, his last work, containing about twelve thousand lines, and including *Alexander's Feast*, he only had two hundred and fifty pounds. The second edition was not required till ten years after his death. Pope, altogether, had L.5320 for his translations of Homer. Gay received four hundred pounds for the first part of his *Beggars' Opera*, and eleven hundred pounds for the second part. Dean Swift was paid by Motte three hundred pounds for *Gulliver's Travels*.

Dr Johnson wrote *Rasselas* that, with the profits, he might defray the expenses of his mother's funeral, and pay some little debts. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he composed it in the evenings of one week, and sent it to the press in portions as it was written, and had never read it over. Messrs Strahan, Dodsley, and another purchased it for one hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when a second edition was called for. He had two hundred and ten pounds for his *Lives of the Poets*.

For his *History of England*, Hume had about five thousand two hundred pounds; and Smollett, for his, two thousand pounds, and yet he died in great poverty. Six thousand pounds was the pecuniary remuneration received by Gibbon for his immortal *Decline and Fall*. Goldsmith had eight hundred pounds from Newberry for three abridged Histories of England. It is interesting

to note that for his *Vicar of Wakefield* he had sixty pounds; for his *Deserted Village*, one hundred pounds; *Selections of English Poetry*, two hundred pounds; and for the *Traveller*, only twenty guineas. The *History of Animated Nature* brought him eight hundred and fifty pounds.

Dr Burney, the learned author of the *History of Music*, had one thousand pounds for the musical articles which he contributed to Rees's *Cyclopædia*; and his gifted daughter, Frances (Madame D'Arblay), received for *Evelina*, a work which created a great sensation at the time, the same sum which Milton had for *Paradise Lost*—five pounds.

Fielding did not attempt fiction till he had tried the drama. His first comedy, *Love in several Masques*, was favourably received; and was afterwards published, and dedicated to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who thought highly of the production. Between 1728 and 1737, he wrote twenty-three plays. Richardson's novel, *Pamela*, appeared three years after; and Fielding determined to produce a work of fiction. *Joseph Andrews* appeared in 1742, and was very successful. Seven years after, *Tom Jones* was written; and for this novel he received seven hundred pounds. Sir Walter Scott says of this: 'Even Richardson's novels are but a step from the old romance, approaching, indeed, more nearly to the ordinary course of events, but still dealing in improbable incidents, and in characters swelled out beyond the ordinary merits of humanity. The *History of a Foundling* is truth and human nature itself; and there lies the inestimable advantage which it possesses over all previous fictions of this particular kind.' For *Amelia*, published in 1751, Fielding had one thousand pounds. It is said to have been 'the only work published in England for which a second edition was called for on the evening of the day on which the first was issued.'

For the *Mysteries of Udolpho*, Mrs Radcliffe was paid five hundred pounds by George Robinson, and eight hundred pounds for the *Italian*; the latter, a very successful work, was published in 1793. Lackington gave Richard Cumberland five hundred pounds for his *Memoirs*. We have mentioned the sums Hume, Smollett, and Gibbon received for their histories. It is interesting to note that their contemporary, Dr Robertson, had six hundred pounds for his *History of Scotland*, and no less than four thousand five hundred pounds for his *History of Charles V.* Burns received about seven hundred pounds from the subscription and sale of the copyright of the second edition of his volume of poems. David Mallet (1700—1765) had one hundred and twenty pounds from Vaillant for his *Amynta and Theodora*; George Colman, senior (1733—1794), the dramatic author, one hundred and fifty pounds each for the *Poor Gentleman* and *Who wants a Guinea?* T. Holcroft (1744—1809), twelve hundred pounds for his translation of the king of Prussia's works. For two years' contributions to the *London Magazine*, Charles Lamb had one hundred and seventy pounds; and sixty guineas were paid to himself and sister for the *Tales from Shakspeare*.

Crabbe (1754—1832) had three thousand pounds from Murray for his poems; Campbell one thousand guineas for the *Pleasures of Hope*, and fifteen hundred guineas for *Gertrude of Wyoming*. By the kindness of Charles James Fox, the latter poet was placed on the pension list for

two hundred pounds a year early in life, and so had not to endure the depressing effects of poverty. Moore had five hundred pounds a year for his *Irish Melodies*, three thousand guineas for *Lalla Rookh*, two thousand guineas for *Life of Byron*. Byron received two thousand guineas for the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, while for his whole poetical works, Murray did not pay less than fifteen thousand pounds. Colburn gave Hook six hundred pounds for the first series of *Sayings and Doings*, one thousand guineas for the second series, and the same for the third. He also received six hundred pounds for *Births, Marriages, and Deaths*, and four hundred pounds a year as editor of Colburn's *New Monthly*. Charles Mathews paid James Smith one thousand pounds for *Country Cousins*, *A Trip to Paris*, *Air Ballooning*, and *A Trip to America*, written for his entertainments. The sums of money Sir Walter Scott received for his works are unparalleled. His share of the first work, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, was but £87, 10s., or half the clear profits; but he sold the copyright afterwards for five hundred pounds. His share in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was £769, 6s. Longman gave him one hundred pounds for *Lyrical Pieces*, suggested by the popularity of the last. Constable offered one thousand guineas for *Marmion* very shortly after it was begun, and without having seen one line of it; and the price was paid long before the poem was published. It was first printed in quarto, price one guinea and a half. In less than a month, the 2000 copies were sold, then 3000 octavo copies followed. By 1825, 31,000 copies of this poem had been sold. For the *Lady of the Lake*, Sir Walter had two thousand guineas; and by 1836, 50,000 copies had been sold. Constable gave fifteen hundred guineas for one half the copyright of the *Lord of the Isles*. Of *Rokeby*, more than 3000 were sold at two guineas by the second day of publication. For his edition of Dryden's works, in eighteen vols., he had seven hundred and fifty-six pounds; fifteen hundred pounds for an edition of Swift; and for the articles on Chivalry, the Drama, and Romance, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, one hundred pounds each. But what a mine of wealth he discovered when he first thought of embodying the thoughts and feelings of the olden time in works of fiction! *Waverley* was an anonymous novel put forth at the dead season. Constable refused to give one thousand pounds for the copyright; but 1000 copies were sold in five weeks, and on his share, Constable netted one thousand pounds in the first year. Constable agreed in 1821 to give for the remaining copyright of the four novels published between December 1819 and January 1821—namely, *Ivanhoe*, the *Monastery*, the *Abbot*, and *Kenilworth*—the sum of five thousand guineas. By these four novels, the fruits of not more than a year's labour, Scott cleared ten thousand pounds before the bargain was completed. But all this (and much more) was of no avail, when Sir Walter, at the age of fifty-five, found himself involved in the failure of Constable & Co. to an enormous extent. The debts exceeded one hundred and twenty thousand pounds. This was in 1825; and in a year and a half, this indefatigable author had reduced the amount by twenty-eight thousand pounds. The *Life of Napoleon* produced eighteen thousand pounds, which was at the rate of more than thirty-six pounds a day for his time. Wood-

stock realised eight thousand six hundred pounds. By the republication of his novels, &c., he reduced the debt by fifty-four thousand pounds.

DULCIE'S DELUSION.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

THAT odious Englishwoman knew him then! How strange that he should not have mentioned his having an acquaintance in the same house with her, Dulcie thought. Perhaps that was what he was going to tell her, on the occasion when she noticed his hesitation. She wondered how he came to have any acquaintance with such a troublesome, pragmatical, old-fashioned, unfeeling creature as Miss Miranda Prinsep—an ugly old woman like that—he who was so young, so elegant, so talented, so every way charming and delightful. She should know all about it to-morrow; she should certainly ask him. On the morrow, Dulcie was fresh and lively again, and she set off to the omnibus bureau with bright eyes, an elastic step, and all the newest and prettiest additions to her costume.

But no Léon Evreux made his appearance; and Dulcie reached her destination sick with disappointment, and in anything but a mood to make their lessons pleasant to her pupils. No mention was made of him; it was impossible for Dulcie to introduce his name; and she once more went away with the hope of seeing him; but in vain, although this time she went into a shop, and lingered over some trifling purchases, in order to prolong her chance. The story of this day was destined to be repeated again and again. A week, a fortnight passed, and Dulcie never saw Léon Evreux. At length she determined to learn something of him, even though it should expose her to some suspicion on the part of Mademoiselle Martel, who, if her expression of countenance were to be trusted, carried about with her a large quantity of that commodity, ready for delivery on the least demand.

'How do you get on with your drawing?' she asked the eldest girl, as she was preparing to go away.

'Not very well, I think,' was the prompt reply. 'We don't like our drawing-master; he is so tiresome and cross.'

'Indeed!' said Dulcie. 'I thought you liked him so much, and he took such pains with you.'

'Ah, but you don't know him, Mademoiselle. It isn't M. Evreux; it's a new one.'

'What! has M. Evreux left you? Why?' asked Dulcie, startled out of all remembrance of caution.

Mademoiselle Martel prevented the child's reply, by saying, in her dryest tones: 'M. Evreux discontinued his tuition for certain domestic reasons, which concern him solely, and are not the affair of these young ladies.'

Dulcie's face turned red under the combined influence of Mademoiselle's rebuke and of her piercing eyes, fixed upon her with cold, unfriendly scrutiny. She hurried away, and was some distance on her dreary road homeward before she could reduce her thoughts to order. She was half-stunned with a sense of unexplained calamity; she had a dazed feeling, like one roused suddenly from a dream. What had happened? Why, even if he had chosen to give up his tuition at Madame de Pradières', should he not have tried to see her as

usual? Dulcie's innocent inexperience received its first shock that day, when the deadly doubt stole over her, chilling her heart and her flesh alike, whether he had meant all that he had looked, whether he really loved her. There was the bitterness of death in this doubt. She had built up a whole existence, filled up the void, banished the solitude of her actual life, ceased to feel its hopeless narrowness, its sordid penury, by the aid of this belief. And now, if it were all unreal, if she were to see him no more, what would become of her? Dulcie hurried on, her mind full of these distracting thoughts, and wholly indifferent to the rain, which was falling heavily, and which had thoroughly soaked her dress by the time she had presented herself before Madame Constant.

'Mon Dieu!' exclaimed that worthy woman, 'is it to be believed! Where, then, was the omnibus, that you have permitted yourself to be thus steeped in rain?'

'There was no place in it,' said Dulcie, telling a falsehood bravely.

'Go up, then, and change all your clothes, and get into your bed, and I will bring you some bouillon.'

'But, dear Madame Constant, I did not ask you to make any, and some coffee will do quite well.'

'No; it will not. You will have the fever, if you are not careful. As for the bouillon, I have more than I needed, and you must not be too proud. We are old acquaintances. But I must not chatter. Go, my child, go; every moment in your wet clothes is dangerous.'

Dulcie obeyed the kind command. She felt strangely giddy as she ascended the stairs. She had taken so little food of late, but it was not until to-day that she had felt any want of it, and now she was faint indeed, but yet she could not eat. She got her clothes off, somehow, wondering vaguely at the light coming through the rain-mist on the window, as she did so, and had laid her weary head, conscious that it was aching terribly now, on the pillow, when Madame Constant came in, carrying the promised bouillon. Dulcie swallowed a little, and almost immediately fell into an uneasy slumber. Madame Constant sat awhile by her bed, basin and spoon in hand, looking at the girl's wan face, her own homely features wearing a thoughtful and troubled expression.

'A hard life,' she soliloquised, 'for her, for a child like her, a petted child too, with no more worldly wisdom than a baby. It's wearing her out fast. She will go like her little mother, only younger. And there is something helping the hard life, something that has to answer for the spare food, and the pretty collars and cuffs, for the gloves, and the boots, and the ribbons. I should know how to understand it, if the food was better instead of worse, and there were rings on the pretty fingers, and a gold chain on the white neck. But she is English—ah! bon Dieu! who is to understand them, these English. They are so independent, and so respectable! They do things we could never dream of, and there is no harm in them.'

Thus Madame Constant, viewing society from the limited range afforded by her *porterie*, gave utterance to her ideas, which were very just in general, and to the particular instance closely applicable, for, in truth, no more innocent yet mistaken creature existed than the girl before her. With a shake of her head and a shrug of her shoulders, she

at length withdrew, having closed the clattering *contre-vent* outside the sullen little window, unadorned by a curtain, and tenderly felt Dulcie's forehead with hands. The girl's sleep did not last long, and when she awoke, it was to lie pale and still, her aching head between her hands, and her aching mind bent upon the revelation of the day, and the bitter disappointment which had been gathering strength for weeks. Constantly, amid the questioning, the self-examination of her thoughts, recurred the tremendous possibility that she might never see him, never hear of him again.

It was hard work to drag herself from her bed the next morning and resume her daily duties. She got through them somehow, not without meeting blank surprised looks, and, at the convent school, curt words of rebuke. Dulcie made in this latter case a timid excuse that she was ill, and returned home, feeling in every limb and nerve how strictly true the excuse was. Madame Constant was busy that evening, and Dulcie had her way in the articles of fasting and moping; but in the morning she staggered rather than walked into the *porterie*, looking ghastly, and asked the good woman to find a commissionaire by whom she might send an apology to Madame de Pradières for her non-attendance.

'I am not able to go,' she said faintly, and yet wildly; 'there is something dreadful the matter with me. I never felt like this before.'

'You are very ill, poor child, and must see the doctor at once.'

'No, no,' feebly protested Dulcie; 'I only want rest; I am only tired. I cannot afford a doctor.'

'I hope it's not infectious,' said Miss Miranda Prince to Susan Cooke. 'If it is, I think Madame Constant has no right to go about from this young woman's room into all the other parts of the house.'

'I believe it is not at all infectious, ma'am,' replied Susan; 'only low fever. A kind of weakness and sinking like, and a light-headedness; the young lady do talk awful nonsense, it appears.'

'I never heard of her talking anything else when she was well,' said Miss Miranda, who had never forgiven poor Dulcie her unfortunate ebullition of sentiment.

'I don't think she will ever be well again,' said Susan Cooke, shaking her head solemnly.

'Good gracious! Why? People even so sentimental as this damsel don't die, at the beginning of summer, of a cold, I should think.'

'I don't know, I'm sure, ma'am. But Maddum Constant do say as the young lady hasn't nothing to strengthen her.'

'How do you know what Madame Constant says, you ignorant girl? After all this time, you can't speak a word of French.'

'No, ma'am; and I don't pretend to. But Maddum has such a way with her eyes and her hands, so expressive-like, I can't help knowing what she means; and she do go on so over the things as comes in for the other ladies, when there ain't next to nothing coming in for the young lady.'

'Has she got no friends?'

'Not one in the world, as I know on, ma'am—leastways'—here Susan hesitated, and looked as if she wished to be questioned—'not one as will do her any good.'

'What do you mean by *that*, pray? Has she any friends that are likely to do her any harm?'

'Well, ma'am,' replied Susan, twisting her fingers in her apron after a fashion which sorely exasperated her mistress, 'I do *not* count Mr Layon the best of friends for her; and when I see them together in the omnibus a-talkin' just like lovers, I did not think as you would like it neither.'

'What!' exclaimed Miss Miranda in an awful voice; 'he is at his games again, is he? Tell me all about it this instant.'

'More fruit, and a bottle of sweet wine, and two beautiful white rolls, and two such plump chickens, which I have left in the porterie, because you do not care to see them until they are cooked,' said Madame Constant, as she entered Dulcie's room three weeks later, when summer was abroad in beautiful Paris; 'and again a little packet at the bottom of the basket, with your name written on it.'

Dulcie stretched out her thin hand for the packet. It contained two silver five-franc pieces; and on the paper in which they were wrapped was written, 'For the doctor.' This was the third time a similar appropriate and anonymous gift had reached her. Madame Constant professed to be wholly ignorant of the source of these benefactions, and of many others, which had included all the principal requisites for Dulcie during her severe and exhausting illness; and in this profession she was quite sincere. A doctor had presented himself, who declared that he had simply received a written direction to visit a young lady at the address given, his first fee being prepaid. From that time a periodical basket made its appearance, by the hands of a commissionaire, containing small quantities of everything which could be supposed necessary or desirable for Dulcie. The first of these baskets Madame Constant received without a question, concluding that it had been sent by Madame de Pradières, and merely thinking that that fine lady, as described to her by Dulcie, might have added kindness to her charity by coming in person to inquire for the sick girl. But the good woman's ideas were overset by the arrival of a note, which, in the impossibility of Dulcie's attending to it, and the bearer being directed to await an answer, she opened. This document was a curt, hard communication from Madame de Pradières, to the effect, that Miss O'Connor's unpunctuality rendered her so undesirable an instructress, that Madame Pradières begged hereby to notify that she had no further occasion for her services, and to enclose the small—it was very small—sum due. Then Madame Constant, abandoning her first idea, resolved to question the commissionaire if another anonymous basket should arrive. After a few days, a second basket was handed in at the porterie; but the bearer could give no indication of its origin. He had received it from the clerk at the omnibus bureau, and was directed to ask for the first basket, and to take it to the same individual. Madame Constant was displeased; she did not like mysteries; but there was no denying that the comforts contained in these anonymous parcels were very acceptable. With poor Dulcie's power of earning, her slender income had come to a stop; and Madame Constant's kindly heart was heavy with anxiety for the girl's future, while her hands, abandoning her beloved

knitting, were ceaselessly busy in her present service. What was to become of her when she should be quite well again? No doubt her place had been filled up everywhere; and, except perhaps at the convent, no one would be willing to cancel new arrangements, and engage her services again.

Dulcie was progressing in the direction of being well, when she received the third anonymous benefaction in money. The inertness, the dull indifference was passing away, and it was not a ghastly, pain-distorted face that she turned on Madame Constant as she held the little packet hidden in her hand. It was a wan face indeed, but it had a flicker of its former rosy light in it, as she eagerly questioned her humble, kind friend.

'I was too ill to know, to think; I took everything as it came. I did not remember that I had so little money, and you were giving me so many good things. And these have come from some one outside, unknown!'

'Certainly. I could not have got them for you otherwise, for Madame Dervaux is still absent in Normandy, and Mademoiselle knows my means as well as she knows my good-will.'

'But, my good, my dear Madame Constant, I have not a friend in the world to send me all these good things, to care whether I am ill or well.' There was a tremulous half-smile upon Dulcie's lips, though, brought there by a delicious secret conviction at variance with her words.

'Mademoiselle must positively have an unknown friend. Fowls, and fruit, and wine, and, above all, money, do not arrive anywhere unsent.'

'It is all very wonderful,' said Dulcie; 'but I hardly feel able to think about it. I think I must sleep for a little.'

'Sleep, then,' said Madame Constant; 'and I will come and wake you presently, with a little bit of broiled chicken, and a little glass of this good wine.'

But Dulcie did not really want to sleep; she only wanted to be alone, that she might think. Of course she knew whence all these good things came! She had but one friend, and from him she had disguised nothing, artlessly telling him the little story of her life. He had remembered it, had thought of her friendlessness and poverty, and had thus aided her. She was much too innocent and simple-minded to feel any wounded delicacy in the matter. To her it was perfectly natural; it was what she would have done in his place. Dulcie settled the whole story in her mind, as she lay smiling upon her pillow, to her perfect satisfaction. Léon Evreux had been prevented from meeting her by some accidental cause—the same as that alluded to by that odious, sneering Mademoiselle Martel—he had afterwards inquired about her, had heard of her illness, and, remembering all she had told him, had thus befriended her. And she had been breaking her heart over the fear, the conviction, that she should never see him more—that all the light which had come so suddenly into her dark and dreary life had gone out, to leave it darker and drearier than before! How she longed for strength now! How earnestly she tested the little she had regained, and calculated the days and hours until she should be able to go out, in the blessed hope of seeing him again! When Madame Constant brought the little bit of broiled chicken and the glass of good wine, Dulcie was looking bright and happy.

So in the evening, when she came again to her young patient, Madame Constant found an improvement in Dulcie. She was not tired and silent, but seemed disposed to talk, and again questioned Madame Constant closely concerning the commissionaire's account of how he had been sent with the first basket.

'The *chef* at the bureau will know who brought it there,' said Dulcie. 'I wish I could find out, that I might send a message to thank the person.'

Madame Constant looked oddly at Dulcie, and said: 'Mademoiselle has some notion, then, of who her unknown friend is?'

'Yes,' said Dulcie reluctantly, and blushing. 'I—I think I can guess.'

Her heart was full. She was very young, and quite ignorant of the world; she had endured long months of lonely self-repression since the great calamity of her mother's death had fallen upon her. She had but this one friend, drawn near to her by the unbought services of all these weeks of pain and weariness. She burst into sudden tears. Madame Constant hurried to her side, frightened, and full of remonstrances, and soothed her as if she had been a child. Then Dulcie, nestling her feeble head against the good woman's protecting arm, faltered out the simple story of her love and her grief, of the fear which had stricken her down, and the hope, new-born that day, which had raised her up.

To this simple story Madame Constant listened with such feelings, concerning its general bearings, as it must necessarily inspire in a Frenchwoman, no matter of what rank in life, and also with other feelings, having their origin in certain private knowledge of her own. But she carefully concealed them all from Dulcie, contenting herself with assenting to the conviction which the girl expressed, that the undeclared lover and the generous anonymous friend must needs be identical; and impressing upon her the absolute necessity for keeping herself quiet. But, when she had left her patient, settled and tranquil, for the night, Madame Constant sat knitting obdurately for an hour or more in her porterie, shaking her head with ominous frequency, and muttering to herself in a distressful fashion.

'She knows all about him, it is certain,' ran some of her thoughts, 'and no good, I am equally sure, or why should she have twice refused to see him, when he asked for her, in that assured tone which made me think he must be in close relationship to her. There cannot be two of the same name and the same looks; for I recall me very well of this young man's bright hair, and handsome face, and wheedling ways. He was not four minutes either time in the porterie, and yet he was wheedling and wheedling, so that when Susanne brought the message that our clean, tidy, detestable English locataire would not see him, and requested he would not give himself the trouble to call again, I felt quite angry, and was sure the meess was in the wrong. But this child, *mon Dieu!* she is quite an infant, and so English, ah, so English! it cannot be explained! I see no way but to speak to the clean and tidy meess, and if she is angry with me, I cannot help it. Yes, I will tell her; I am determined. She cannot kill me; and if she bites me, I do not much mind.'

On the following morning, Madame Constant, in fulfilment of her valiant purpose, requested, by

means of a whole vocabulary of signs addressed to the at first bewildered Susan, an interview with Miss Miranda Prinsep. It was granted, and it proved lengthy.

Madame Constant left the austere presence of Miss Miranda, and betook herself to her porterie and the preparation of Dulcie's breakfast with a troubled countenance. It cost her some effort to banish that trouble before she had to meet Dulcie's eye. Her patient had rested well, and youth was rapidly doing its blessed work of restoration. She sat up and greeted Madame Constant cheerfully, told her she was eager for her breakfast, and speedily led the conversation to the topic of the preceding day. Did Madame Constant think she could go to the omnibus bureau? and when? how early in the day?

'Yes, yes; do not be afraid,' said Madame Constant; 'I will go before noon. But you must do something for me in return. Somebody wishes to see you.'

'O Madame Constant, who is it?' asked Dulcie nervously.

'Don't frighten yourself; it is only the English locataire, Miss Prinsep.' Madame Constant enunciated the name with a customary gasp. 'She has asked me a great deal about you, and she wants to see you.'

'But she never took any notice of me—since—you remember? She would not even bow to me.'

'Never mind that now. She is not so unkind as she seems. And you know—pardon me, Mademoiselle, if I am indiscreet—you must not reject the chance of so respectable a friendship.'

'You are right, dear Madame Constant, only it surprised me, because—because—she knows M. Evreux.'

'So, then, she is aware of that already,' thought Madame Constant. 'How did she find it out, I wonder? Had he the hardihood to tell her?—Does she indeed?' said the sagacious woman aloud. 'But you know that does not concern your seeing her. And I shall feel so easy in my mind about you if there is some one here while I am out. May I bring the English meess up before I go out?'

'Yes,' said Dulcie resignedly; 'let her come.'

IN CHESHIRE.

A FINE broad plain is this as e'er foot prest:
Far to the east, far up the heavens, rise
Hills tossed on hills; while farther to the west
The wide blue ocean meets the wide blue skies.
Girdled with fruit-trees—apple, pear, and plum—
Snug-lying homesteads nestle in sweet nooks,
Set in green fields, whose sole industrial hum
Is buzz of bees and murmuring of brooks.
And here and there slim spires and dumpy towers
Prick up and peer from belts of elm and yew,
Etched on the azure sky. A river scours
Seaward with languid sweep; and full in view,
On this still morn, beyond the river's mouth,
Two dun sails dip and drop towards the south.

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